

# FestFlash on Creativity and Innovation



**FESTLAB**

An initiative of the  
European Festivals Association



Creativity  
and Innovation  
European Year 2009

*Launched at the occasion of the European Year of Creativity and Innovation, the FestLab for Creativity and Innovation is established to spotlight the excellence of festivals in the creative and societal process and to give incentives to successfully fulfil the festivals' core mission which still is the artistic one. The FestFlash on Creativity and Innovation follows the mission of the FestLab.*

FestFlash 3, July 2009

**Audiences meet artists:**

**Summer Festivals invite to explore  
emerging artists and new works**

*Tradition and modernity - eternity and actuality - pretensions and appeal. Today, these are the antipodes between which an artist, in general, and a composer, in particular, must move and take up position. Naturally, it was the same in earlier epochs, at least to a certain degree, but the pressure to create something utterly new and original has never been as high as in the 20th and 21st centuries. Accordingly, there are only a few contemporary composers who manage to sustain the realisation of new ideas while, at the same time, minding the interests of their audiences.*

(Rheingau Music Festival)

Festivals are platforms for the creation of new works. They explore cross-disciplinary, interactive approaches and programme in non-traditional venues. One of the [commitments](#) defined in the FestLab for Creativity and Innovation is to offer young artists specific laboratory spaces “in order to broaden creative skills and foster individual and collective talents and competences.”

Summer time is festival time - and offers many meeting moments and spaces between arts, artists and audience!

**In the spotlight**

**Contentus Moraviae Music Festival (Czech Republic)  
celebrates renowned female composers**

The [CONCENTUS MORAVIAE International Music Festival](#) is a unique musical event of the South Moravian and Vysočina Regions involving 20 towns in two countries. It revives historical monuments as it takes place in the inspirational environments such as castles, churches,

synagogues and museums, thus offering access to diverse audiences.

## In dialogue with...

### David Dittrich, Director Contentus Moraviae Festival: The support of new names is crucial!



In 1996, David Dittrich founded the Contentus Moraviae Festival. In 2004, Mr Dittrich initiated the formation of the all-European Czech Dreams triennial. The project follows on from the principles of the Contentus Moraviae festival and it has been conceived as a contribution to the revival of cultural co-operation between European regions. 85 towns from 19 European states participated in the Czech Dreams project last year. Mr Dittrich is involved in long-term co-operation between regions within the EU (such as Utrecht (NL), Gers (F), Lodz (PL), Lower Austria) and in the question of financing joint projects supporting regional cultural events. He has co-operated with a number of regions.

*European Festivals Association (EFA): The 2009 edition of the Contentus Moraviae Festival under the motto "Ladies First" finished only recently. How did you manage to strike a balance between programming rather unknown or little-known names and ensuring the attendance of diverse audiences including the young generation?*

David Dittrich (DD): We paid an exceptional amount of attention to setting the proportions of the programme which we prepared with the Swiss dramaturge, Walter Labhart. Despite the fact that a number of the works of the female composers were not generally known, they were predominantly works of exceptional quality and in a number of cases they can be said to be great discoveries. If you supplement this with top performers of the young and middle generation who perform the works with enthusiasm, half your success is assured.

We also enriched the classical programme with charismatic female performer-composers from the areas of jazz, alternative music, folk music and so on who further enhanced the atmosphere of this year's festival. We are very pleased that the wider public accepted our dramaturgical plan with enthusiasm and considered this year's programme to be one of the most interesting in the entire history of the festival.

*EFA: In how far do you see the Contentus Moraviae Festival as a platform for emerging artist and promising new talents?*

DD: Since the very inception of the festival, we have provided space to young artists and starting musicians and we intend to continue in this. If we did not assist in the presentation and co-creation of new names in the musical world, it could happen that in just a few short years we would only have a very narrow group of overpriced artists who would be the only ones capable of attracting the public.

*EFA: The organisation - one festival happening in over 20 towns across two countries - is unusual, demanding - very creative. What role did the potential of attracting tourism versus the artistic programme play in the decision to revive historical monuments in a broad area?*

DD: The role is significant. However, when we established the festival, we mainly wanted to establish an event which would bring high quality music to smaller towns. We make use of the wonderful spaces of chateaux, churches and castles, because they are paradoxically often the only places where the concerts can be organised.

Nevertheless, any such revival of monuments through music is perceived very positively not only by the local public, but also by tourists who come to the Czech Republic in increasing numbers to visit the festival for that reason and to our delight often return regularly. By combining beautiful music and attractive spaces, we endeavour to make use of the unique genius loci of the South Moravian and Vysočina Regions.

*EFA: 2009 is the European Year of Creativity and Innovation. Which role do you see for festivals in the process of fostering innovative and creative talents? In how far does the FestLab for Creativity and Innovation help festivals in their mission to act as catalysts for creativity and innovation?*

DD: I am convinced that creativity and professionalism constitute the basis for the success of festival productions. Creative and innovative dramaturgy and the approach to the production and promotion of the festival can bring us the long-term interest of the public and also the option of organising attractive events for a relatively acceptable amount of money.

Interesting and creative programmes constitute an opportunity for young talents to raise awareness of themselves in the offer of already established artists. The FestLab for Creativity and Innovation is an excellent idea of how to inspire the members of the European Festivals Association and festivals in general to achieve new views of the dramaturgy and to re-ask the question as to what the audience wants and how far they can go in wooing the audiences, i.e. so that we can put together attractive programmes of high artistic quality. If such a programme is able to be created, it is necessary to develop it and to find opportunities to use it in a number of other places; it is therefore an excellent opportunity to establish cooperation and co-productions. The FestLab is an exceptionally interesting challenge and it is only up to us how to bring this idea to life.

## FestFlash Highlights

### Emilia Romagna speaks with Einstein: “imagination is more important than knowledge”



Referring to Albert Einstein, the [2009 Emilia Romagna edition](#) stresses that imagination is more important than knowledge. Organising new productions in Bologna, Ravenna, Ferrara and Forlì-Cesena, the festival takes place in ancient castles, churches, theatres and squares.

### Estoril Music Weeks: Tradition versus Innovation

In 2009, the [Estoril Music Weeks' Mare Nostrum](#) is developed around the concept *Tradition-Innovation* and promotes the new generation of composers and the Mediterranean cultural heritage. Through innovative practices, new productions, international cooperation, the festival stimulates new creations from composers of the young generation.

### Granada Festival as a “vehicle” encouraging creativity



The [Granada Festival](#) is a “vehicle for what needs to be expressed, a path leading from the unknown to what ultimately emerges”. Granada is setting innovative trends at a multitude of levels: The FEX (Festival Extension) makes culture accessible for all citizens, from minorities to children. *Sleeping Beauty* is but one example: the commissioned choreography aims at a teenage audience and involves the active participation of young people in the creative process of this work.

## Dubrovnik: The city is a stage

“The inseparability of the actual, or real, city from the imaginary and artistic one is what fascinates me and probably the Festival's visitors, too,” says Ivica Prlender, General Manager of the [Dubrovnik Summer Festival](#). With its own Opera and Drama Ensembles the festival produces and co-produces works and ensures an intimate exchange between artist and audience.

## Rheingau Musik Festival paving the way for young musicians



Aiming at supporting arts and culture with a special focus on young musicians and their training, the [Rheingau Musik Festival](#)'s foundation [enables](#) schools to purchase instruments for the musical education of their students.

## How to become a FestLabPass holder

The European Festivals Association invites all arts festivals to sign up to the initiative “FestLab for Creativity and Innovation” and commit to its objective. Read the Open Call [here](#).

## About FestFlash and EFA

The **FestFlash on Creativity and Innovation** brings news about festivals and their activities implemented in the spirit of the FestLab for Creativity and Innovation.

[www.efa-aef.eu/festlab!](http://www.efa-aef.eu/festlab!)

The **FestLab for Creativity and Innovation** is an initiative of the [European Festivals Association](#) in the framework of the [European Year of Creativity and Innovation](#).

The **European Festivals Association (EFA)** is the umbrella organisation for arts festivals across Europe and beyond. Over more than 50 years, EFA has grown into a dynamic network representing more than 100 music, dance, theatre and multidisciplinary festivals, national festivals associations (representing on their behalf more than 1,000 festivals) and cultural organisations from 37 (mainly European) countries. Since 2004, the EFA offices are based in Belgium.

EFA is initiator of the **European House for Culture** ([www.efa-aef.eu](http://www.efa-aef.eu)), contributes to the [‘Platform for Intercultural Europe’](#), is member of the EU Platform on [‘Access to Culture’](#) and collaborates closely with [‘A Soul for Europe’](#).



European Festivals Association – Kleine Gentstraat  
46 – 9051 Gent – Belgium  
T: +32 9 241 8080 – F: +32 9 241 8089 – [info@efa-  
aef.eu](mailto:info@efa-<br/>aef.eu) – [www.efa-aef.eu](http://www.efa-aef.eu).



EFA thanks for their support:



With the support of  
the Flemish government

